

HANNELE

BY THE SAME AUTHOR

Uniform with this Volume

LONELY LIVES

THE WEAVERS

THE SUNKEN BELL

LONDON : WILLIAM HEINEMANN

HANNELE

A DREAM POEM

By GERHART HAUPTMANN

Translated from the German by

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INTRODUCTION

GERHART HAUPTMANN was born on November 15, 1862,* at Ober Salzbrunn in Silesia. In dedicating *Die Weber* (*The Weavers*) to his father, he wrote: "The germ of this drama lay in what you have told me of the life of my grandfather, who in his young days sat at the loom, a poor weaver, like those here depicted." How the family rose in the world, I do not know. In another of his plays, *Vor Sonnenaufgang* (*Before Sunrise*), Hauptmann has drawn a dismal picture of the raw barbarism of the peasant proprietors in a certain Silesian district, who have been suddenly enriched by the discovery of coal-seams in their land; but the weavers would probably have little enough share in the treasure-trove. Be this as it may, Hauptmann's father, at the time of his birth, was a hotel-keeper in a small watering-place. Gerhart is said to have been

* For most of the following biographical details, I am indebted to an article by Herr Ludwig Salomon in the *Illustirte Zeitung*, December 9, 1893.

a dreamy and delicate child, taking little interest in the coming and going of his father's guests, but a constant attendant at the theatrical performances which took place every season in a little wooden theatre. In due course he was sent to school at Breslau, but the stern and perhaps somewhat mechanical discipline was so repellent to him that he learned nothing, and presently prevailed upon his parents to remove him. He was now placed with an uncle, a farmer, who was to teach him farming; and to this the youth is said really to have applied himself. He remained, however, a phantast, a dreamer, and about this time plunged deep into Biblical studies and passed through a period of mysticism. At last he thought he had found his vocation, when, in the spring of 1879, he obtained permission to enter the Art School at Breslau, in order to study sculpture. But "die Kraft war schwach, allein die Lust war gross." One of his teachers, Professor Härtel, saw that there was more of the dramatist than of the sculptor in him, and advised and assisted him to become a student at the University of Jena, on the classic ground of German literature. He had written at Breslau a *Hermannslied*—no doubt a more or less epic poem—and we may safely trace to his reminiscences of the Art School the local colour of his comedy, *College Crampton*. At Jena he found a guide, philosopher, and friend in Professor Böhntlingk, wrote

a drama, *Römer und Germanen* (probably a dramatic version of his *Hermannslied*), and conceived the plan of a romance to be entitled *Perikles*. In order to work up the local colour, he felt that he must see Athens, and actually set forth in the spring of 1883. Happening to visit Capri on his way, however, he was so fascinated by the loveliness of the island and its surroundings that he went no further. A study of the history of "Capreae" made very real to his imagination the gloomy despot whose ghost may be said to haunt the island, and a vast tragedy, *Tiberius*, was the inevitable result. The manuscript was duly despatched to Professor Böhtlingk, whose judgment of it was so unfavourable that the poet, utterly discouraged, determined to return to his first love, and once more try his hand at sculpture. To that end, he betook himself to Rome, and set to work, but was presently disabled by a severe attack of typhus fever. On his convalescence, he returned to Germany, and after passing a short time in Hamburg and Dresden, settled in Berlin, and devoted himself to philosophical and historical studies. Here he married, in 1885; and the dedication of *Hannele* to his wife denotes that his choice has proved a happy one. It is said, too, that the lady was by no means a "tochterless lass,"—a detail which it may not be impertinent to mention, since criticism may reasonably inquire whether a poet writes under the spur of

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material necessity, or is free to await and obey the promptings of his creative instinct.

About the time of his marriage, he published an epic poem, *Promethidenlos*, which attracted little attention. It was not till 1890 that his name became generally known. On the 20th of October in that year, the Society of the Freie Bühne (the Théâtre Libre or Independent Theatre of Berlin) produced at the Lessing Theater his five-act drama *Vor Sonnenaufgang*, a study of the corruption ensuing upon the sudden enrichment of the Silesian peasants aforesaid. Its reception was of the stormiest, and the controversy which raged around it stimulated the poet to further efforts. In a few months, he produced (at the same theatre) *Das Friedensfest* (*The Feast of Peace*, or *Christmastide*) which he describes as "a family catastrophe." In both these plays the principle of heredity is somewhat violently insisted on, the leading motive of the former being hereditary alcoholism, of the latter, hereditary madness. Next, in 1891, came *Einsame Menschen*, which may perhaps be best translated *Lonely Souls*. It suggests a transcript of Ibsen's *Rosmersholm*, with the poetry omitted, and with Beata's hysteria transferred to Rebecca and Rosmer. It, too, was first performed by the Free Stage Society, but was afterwards produced at the Deutsches Theater in Berlin, the Vienna Burgtheater, and many other leading German theatres. *College Crampton* (Col-

league Crampton), a five-act comedy, or rather character-study, produced in 1892, was Hauptmann's first financial success. It was first performed at the Deutsches Theater, and has become part of the standing repertory of this and other theatres. The same year witnessed the production, by the Free Stage Society, of what is probably, as yet, Hauptmann's most important work, the five-act drama, *De Waber* (Silesian for *Die Weber* or *The Weavers*) written throughout in dialect. It is called "A Drama of the 'Forties," and consists of vividly realised scenes from the mid-century labour troubles in Silesia, brought home to the poet, as we have seen, by the reminiscences of his father and grandfather. Its production on the regular stage was forbidden by the Berlin police ; but, by taking legal action, the management of the Deutsches Theater succeeded in quashing this prohibition, and the drama was produced in the autumn of 1894. Under the title of *Les Tisserands*, it was acted with great success at the Théâtre Libre in Paris. In 1893 Hauptmann produced at the Deutsches Theater, *Der Biberpelz* (*The Beaver Cloak*), "A Thieves' Comedy," in Berlin dialect; and the same season witnessed the first performance of *Hannele*.

The history of *Hannele*, though brief, has been sufficiently eventful. It has made the round of the

State Theatres of Germany and Austria, has everywhere been popular, and has everywhere met with vehement opposition from a certain section of the critics and the public. In Vienna, a learned critic named Wengraf, in the *Neue Revue*, upbraided Hauptmann for his remissness in neglecting "the gigantic mass of documentary evidence" upon juvenile psychology to be found in the English Blue Books! Had he referred to the evidence taken before some Parliamentary Committee in the early part of last century (the exact date is not stated, but the report is quoted in a German publication of 1848) he would have found that the minds of children are not full of odds and ends of Biblical knowledge. One girl of eleven had never heard of heaven or hell; another had heard the name of Jesus Christ, but did not know who he was; and so forth. What sort of a "naturalist" is this, the critic asks triumphantly, who neglects to study human nature in the English Blue Books? As though the ignorance of a London street-arab of (say) 1840 could afford even the vaguest presumption as to the mental furniture of a Silesian village-girl of to-day! and as though it were not plainly stated in the text that Hannele had received religious instruction from the Sisters of Mercy! Among the monumental ineptitudes of criticism, this effort of Herr Wengraf's seems to me to take a high place. The German Emperor (of course a devout Protestant) is said to

have "hailed in *Hannele* the beginning of a school of Christian drama"; while his Catholic Majesty of Austria lent his countenance to the production of the play at the Burgtheater. At Munich, the authorities of the Hoftheater condescended to mount it, for the sake of a certain *Kassa-Erfolg*, money success; but the Court, and even the Director of the theatre, Herr Possart, marked their contempt for the thing by being conspicuously absent from the first performance. The King of Würtemberg, on the other hand, was so charmed with the piece, that he invited Hauptmann to a private audience. The two veterans of German romance and drama, Freytag and Spielhagen, have both written appreciatively of the play; while on the other hand its supposed pietistic tendency has given offence to many worthy people. It has been ridiculed for its childishness, praised for its profundity, denounced for its realism, applauded for its idealism, expounded as an allegory, refuted as a pamphlet—in short it has set all playgoing Germany by the ears.

In Paris, where it was produced at the Théâtre Libre early in 1894, it excited as eager, though not as protracted, discussion. Having been mounted for one or two performances only, it can scarcely have had justice done it from the scenic point of view, though Jules Lemaitre praises the ingenuity of the stage-mechanism. It is evident, at any rate, that the text was imperfectly heard, for on this point we have two

witnesses who cannot be suspected of collusion—Francisque Sarcey and Émile Zola. Sarcey, for instance, avers that he did not hear a “*traître mot*” of the speeches of Mattern, and that many other passages were equally inaudible. Under these circumstances, he could scarcely be expected to take great pleasure in the performance—and he did not. He made it the occasion of one of his bitterest tirades against the exotism which, he declares, is swamping the French stage. He declined to believe that such a piece of sheer puerility could possibly have been successful even in Germany. “Call this art!” he cried; “it is a wretched piece of mechanical trickery. It shows no observation, no imagination, no talent of any sort. It is beneath contempt.”* Jules Lemaître

* In his next feuilleton, M. Sarcey returned to the attack. Some one had written him from Berlin to say that he was right in assuming that there, too, *Hannele* had been admired only by a clique; whereupon he remarked: “I should have been surprised and vexed if our neighbours, who are people of sense and taste, had taken seriously a piece of such evident puerility. . . . But enough of affairs beyond the Rhine; let us return to France.” It so happened that the work of adult French art into the consideration of which the critic plunged with a sigh of relief, was a drama at the Châtelet entitled *Le Trésor des Radjahs*. The poor but virtuous Chevalier de Saverny loves the beautiful Diane de Rochegrune, who, her father being confined in a madhouse, is under the guardianship of a villainous uncle. The uncle rejects his suit; but just as he is departing disconsolate a

was more sympathetic. While declaring that it was not "du théâtre," but rather a work of magic-lantern art, he admitted that it gave him considerable pleasure. "It is a very plausible dream," he said, "governed by a very clear and simple logic. Yes, it is doubtless

weird-looking old man taps him on the shoulder and says, "I like your looks; I will make your fortune; I will give you full directions for finding the Treasure of the Rajahs." The lover induces the wicked uncle to defer his niece's marriage for a year while he goes in search of the treasure. But the captain of the vessel in which he sets sail is a pirate in disguise, who has been suborned by the wicked uncle to "suppress" the Chevalier. The suppression is to take place in a mountain gorge, where a bridge over a torrent has been sawn through. But instead of the Chevalier it is the pirate himself who falls into the trap, and of course the Chevalier saves him, and earns his undying gratitude. Need I pursue the thrilling narrative further? Yes—one thing I must not omit to mention: the weird old man is of course Diane's father, who has escaped from the madhouse; and he makes a second escape in time to appear as *deus ex machinâ* at the close, when the wicked uncle is on the point of marrying Diane to the wrong man, in defiance of his compact to Saverny. M. Sarcey himself is my authority for these incidents, which (with many others) he details with the utmost gusto. If the reader thinks it inconceivable that a man of "sense and taste" like M. Sarcey should not have perceived the irony of the chance which led him in one breath to denounce the "puerility" of *Hannele* and in the next to treat with the utmost seriousness *Le Trésor des Radjahs*, I can only refer him to the feuilleton of *Le Temps* for February 12, 1894.

such a dream as this that passes through the mind of a dying girl of thirteen or fourteen, very pious and very unhappy. It must be something like this, in her eyes, the drama of death that ushers her into paradise—a series of visions, naïve as monkish illuminations.” “Et, ma foi,” he concluded in a paragraph which would lose its point in translation, “cette imagerie mystique a réveillé, du moins chez quelques spectateurs, la ‘jeune communiant’ que nous portons en nous. J’ai cru cependant comprendre, à certains propos d’entr’acte, que cette jeune communiant dormait ferme chez mon bon maître Sarcey.” Henri Céard of the *Événement* took as his text a line of Sully Prudhomme’s to the effect that sleep is the last consolation of the wretched, and saw in the play an illustration of the yearning towards ideal rest and heavenly compensation for the cruelties of life which inspires the fever-dreams of the suffering poor. Louis de Gramont, one of the ablest of the Théâtre Libre school of playwrights, averred in *L’Éclair* that the production was one of the most moving he had ever witnessed; Jean Jullien, author of *Le Théâtre Vivant*, confessed that he felt the physical horror of the spectacle too much to appreciate its spiritual beauties; and Catulle Mendès “wept hot tears.” Finally, Émile Zola, while admitting that he saw many beauties in Hauptmann’s work, relegated it to a comparatively low artistic plane on account of the large part played by

mere mechanism in the production of the effect. He never felt (so he declared) "le petit frisson" which the poet designed to produce.

In New York, *Hannele* was announced for production at the Fifth Avenue Theatre, with a young lady named Alice Pierce, about fifteen years of age, in the title-part. Miss Pierce had had long experience of the stage in the character of Little Lord Fauntleroy; but the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children felt outraged at the idea of her representing Hannele. Its spokesman, Mr. Elbridge T. Gerry, addressed to the Mayor of New York a letter from which the following is an extract: "This revolting and horrible travesty of a resurrection, as a theatrical exhibition in a public theatre, is not only perfectly shocking and at variance with public decency, but is well calculated, in the mind of a nervous child, to create a mental impression of a lasting and most injurious character, to say nothing of the awful blasphemy in which she is thus compelled to take part." Thus it appears that what is sickly piety in Berlin is "awful blasphemy" in New York; but in that, of course, there is nothing surprising. Mr. Elbridge T. Gerry carried his point, and Miss Pierce was forbidden to act. The part was played by an adult actress, and the production had only a brief run.

So much for the conflict of opinion which has raged

around *Hannele*. It is not for me to attempt anything like a summing up—that must be left to “old Justice Time.” But, as I have naturally studied the poem pretty closely in the act of translating it, I may perhaps, without impertinence, state how it impresses me.

Hauptmann describes his work as a “*Traum-Dichtung*,” and one cannot do better than translate this: “Dream-Poem.” But there is a shade of meaning in “*Dichtung*” which “Poem” does not express. Perhaps it would not be entirely misleading to call the play the *idealisation* of a dying child’s dream. It is clearly “*Dichtung*” in opposition to “*Wahrheit*.” It is “such stuff as dreams are made of,” but moulded into a poetic form and consistency such as no real dream ever possessed. The verses which bring each of the two parts to a close were at first a stumbling-block to me; but I now see in them the key to the particular convention which the poet has chosen to adopt. Which of us has not in his sleep composed reams of poetry which seemed at the time at least as good as “*Kubla Khan*”? On waking, we have in vain sought to recapture a single line of it, and the probability is that it was pure gibberish, like Alice’s ballad of the Jabberwock; yet the illusion of its magnificence remains with us for a short time even after we have realised that we have been dreaming. Well, Hauptmann has sought to

produce on our waking minds the effect which this dream-poetry produces on the dream-intellect. Hannele has been accustomed to sing hymns with the Sisters of Mercy, and to associate metrical utterance with sanctity and solemnity. What more likely, then, than that the "brownies of her brain," as Mr. Stevenson puts it, should fall to versifying when they begin to play the parts of angels and ministers of grace? It is, of course, improbable in the last degree that the very words of these verses, or even of Hannele's prose dialogue with her Mother, or of the scene between the Stranger and Mattern, should take shape in the dying child's fancy; but the poet's effort has not been to represent a dream as it actually is, but a dream as it impresses itself on the dreamer's mind. It is only our waking intelligence that recognises the incoherence and absurdity of such fragments of our dreams as remain in our memory. To our sleeping intelligence (if I may put it so) they seem rational and coherent enough. And as the poet asks us, in this case, to put our waking intelligence in the place of Hannele's sleeping intelligence, he is justified, not only by necessity but by logic, in making the fantasies of the dreamer as consistent to us as they would *appear* to her.

It is certainly a complex task that Hauptmann has set himself. He essays a problem within a problem, as it were—a study in child-psychology, expressed in

terms of dream-psychology. Through the fever-fancies of the dying girl we are to divine her character and habit of mind. And we are enabled to do so, as it seems to me, with astonishing clearness. We see through and through her poor shallow little soul. We see how she takes refuge from the cruelties of her stepfather and the other hardships of her life in the promised land of religion, borrowing its local colour in great measure from the few fairy-tales she has heard. She is pious; she believes that the Lord Jesus will put her persecutors to shame, and will receive her into a heaven teeming with all the delights denied her on earth. Her little vanities come out pathetically. She is *such* a good girl in her own estimation; she is an example to all the other children; she is accustomed to enact in fancy the heroine's part in her fairy-tales, and hers is the foot which the glass slipper is found to fit. At the same time she has been troubled now and then (like how many thousands of better-instructed children) by that dark and dismal text about "sin against the Holy Ghost."* Furthermore, we can see in her the awakening of sentiment, the first innocent, unconscious stirrings of sex. She adores her schoolmaster: his name is a delight to her, his hair and beard are lovely in her eyes. She has woven little romances with him for

* Compare Borrow's *Lavengro*, chap. lxxiii. and following chapters.

their hero, and when she dreams of the Lord Jesus she naturally sees him with the lineaments of her dear Herr Gottwald. These emotions, with her love for her mother and her dread of her stepfather, constitute her whole mental experience. We see both the material which her imagination has to work upon and the impulses or instincts which direct its workings. Her mother's death has removed the last mitigation of her lot. Ill-usage and starvation have fevered her mind, and her thoughts are all with her mother in heaven. It is already under the influence of a hallucination that she throws herself into the pond; and from the moment she is carried into the pauper refuge until death softly drops the curtain upon the tremulous fever-drama, the progress and fluctuations of her delirium are marked and motived with the nicest art.

The realistic passages, if I may call them so, such as the ravings of Mattern, and the speeches of Pleschke and Hanke in the second part, are as true to dream-psychology as the ideal episodes. We are the sternest realists in our sleep as well as the loftiest idealists; at least we seem so to ourselves. Who has not wondered, on waking from a dream, at the masterly mimicry with which the brownies of his brain have, or seem to have, reproduced the tones, gestures, antics and mannerisms, nay, even the character, of this person or that who has figured in the vision? If it is natural, as it surely

is, that the child's mother and the Sister of Mercy—the two women who had been kind to her—should melt into one without exciting more than a momentary surprise, it is no less natural that old Pleschke's stammerings and every little cough of the hump-backed village tailor should reproduce themselves in the dreamer's mind. It would be idle to pretend that every detail is beyond criticism, and that the poet's invention has always been unerringly inspired. But the more closely one studies his "Dream-Poem," the more clearly does one recognise that it is no lawless and facile fantasy, but a deliberate and carefully thought-out work of art, founded on delicate observation and consistently obeying a logic of its own.

I say nothing of the social or spiritual lessons which may—or may not—be deduced from *Hannele*. The author, it is clear, points no moral whatever, but simply presents a character, a soul history, to make what appeal it may to the heart and conscience of each individual reader. Nor do I speculate upon the theatrical qualities of the "Dream-Poem"; they can be ascertained only by experiment. We know that the play has been very successful on the German stage; yet one cannot but feel that it presents almost insuperable difficulties to the stage-manager, and that only the rarest tact and ingenuity could save the poetry of the conception from being obscured and vulgarised by

the element of mechanical illusion and scenic trickery. The experiment is certainly worth trying; and it seems almost inconceivable that any legal impediment should be offered to the theatrical presentation of so innocent, humane and reverent a work of art.

WILLIAM ARCHER.

CHARACTERS

HANNELE.*

GOTTWALD, *a Schoolmaster.*

TULPE,

HEDWIG,

PLESCHKE,

HANKE,

} *Paupers.*

SISTER MARTHA, *a Sister of Mercy.*

SEIDEL, *a Forester.*

BERGER, *Parish Overseer.*

SCHMIDT, *Parish Officer.*

DR. WACHLER.

There appear to HANNELE in her fever-dream: her Father, MATTERN the Mason; a Female Figure, her dead Mother; a great black Angel; three Angels of Light; the Sister of Mercy; GOTTWALD and his Schoolchildren; the Paupers, PLESCHKE, HANKE, and others; SEIDEL; four white-clad Youths; a Stranger; many great and small Angels of Light; Mourners, Women, &c.

* In this and other names in which it occurs, the final e ought to be sounded.

H A N N E L E

A DREAM-POEM

PART I

*A room in the Pauper Refuge of a mountain village.
Bare walls ; a door at the back, centre ; a small
window, scarcely more than a peep-hole, to the
left ; in front of the window, a rickety table with a
bench ; to the right, a bedstead with a straw pallet ;
against the back wall, a stove with a bench, and a
second bedstead, also with a straw pallet, and with
a few rags spread over it. It is a stormy December
night.*

*At the table sits TULPE, an old, ragged beggar woman,
singing from a hymn-book by the light of a
tallow-candle.*

TULPE.

[*Sings.*] Abide with us in mercy,
Lord Jesus Christ, we pray,
That henceforth we may never——

HEDWIG, *commonly called HETE, a disreputable-looking woman of about thirty, with a fringe, enters the room. She has a thick shawl over her head and a bundle under her arm ; for the rest, lightly and poorly dressed.*

HETE.

[Blowing on her hands, without laying down the bundle under her arm.] Oh, Lord, Lord ! what weather ! *[She lets the bundle slip down upon the table, goes on blowing into her hollow hands, and treads alternately with one of her ragged shoes upon the other.]* We haven't had such an awful night this many a year.

TULPE.

What have you got there ?

HETE.

[Grinding her teeth and whimpering with pain, seats herself upon the bench by the stove, and begins to take off her shoes.] Oh, mercy ! oh, mercy ! my toes ! They burn like fire.

TULPE.

[Has untied the bundle. A loaf, a packet of chicory, a cornet of coffee, and one or two pairs of stockings, &c.,

are revealed.] You'll be able to spare me a trifle out of all this.

[HETE, *who, having been busy with her shoes has not noticed TULPE, now swoops like a vulture upon her property, and gathers it together.*

HETE.

[*With one foot bare and the other still in the shoe, hobbles with her bundle to the bedstead against the back wall.*] Do you think I've trudged miles and miles, hey? and had the marrow frozen in my bones, for you to go and grab it all, hey?

TULPE.

Oh, shut up, you fool! Do you think I want to steal the blessed rubbish you've wheedled out of people?

[*She stands up, closes her book with a bang, and carefully wipes it against her skirts.*

HETE.

[*Concealing her bundle under the straw pallet.*] Who's done more hard work in her life, I wonder—me or you? You've never done anything worth talking about, for as old as you are—every one knows that!

TULPE.

Leastways I haven't done what you have. Haven't I heard the pastor calling you over the coals? When

I was young, like you, I took better care of myself, I can tell you.

HETE.

Was that why they put you in prison, perhaps?

TULPE.

And you may go there too, as soon as you please. I've only to find a Shandarm*—I could tell him a thing or two. Just you keep a civil tongue in your head, my girl, I warn you.

HETE.

All right! Send on your Shandarm to me, and I'll have something to tell him too.

TULPE.

You can tell what tales you like, for me.

HETE.

Who was it that stole the great-coat, hey? from the innkeeper's little boy, hey? [TULPE *makes a motion as if to spit at HETE.*] Tulpe! take care! just drop that.

TULPE.

Get along with you! I wouldn't have a thing of yours at a gift.

* Gendarme.

HETE.

'Cause you know you won't get anything.

[*A furious gust of wind shakes the house.*

PLESCHKE and HANKE are actually hurled by the storm into the passage. PLESCHKE, a ragged old fellow with a goitre, almost in his dotage, breaks into loud laughter. HANKE, a young black-guard and ne'er-do-well, curses. Both are seen through the open door shaking the snow off their caps and clothes upon the stone floor of the passage. Each carries a bundle.

PLESCHKE.

Oh, curse the hail! curse the hail! it stings like the devil! The old shanty of a Refuge, one of these days—one of these days, it'll come toppling about our ears.

[HETE, seized with a thought at the sight of them, takes her bundle from under the pallet, rushes out past the men, and can be heard running up a flight of stairs.

PLESCHKE.

[*Calling after HETE.*] Why are you running—why are you running away? We—we won't—do nothing to you. Hey, Hanke, hey?

TULPE.

[*At the stove, busied with a pot of potatoes.*] The creature's out of her senses. She thinks we want to take her things away from her.

PLESCHKE.

[*Coming into the room.*] Oh, Lord, Lord, good people! Did ever—did ever you see the like! Good evenin'—good evenin', ha! Oh, the devil, the devil! what weather! what weather! I was blown down, I was—all my length—all my length—as flat as a pancake.

[*He has hobbled to the table, his knees bent and trembling. He lays down his bundle and turns his nodding head, white-haired and blear-eyed, to TULPE. He is still gasping for breath after his struggle with the storm. He coughs and makes movements to warm himself. In the meantime HANKE too has entered the room. He has put down his beggar's wallet beside the door, and at once began, shivering with cold, to cram dry twigs into the stove.*

TULPE.

Where have you been to?

PLESCHKE.

Me? Me? Where have I been? Oh, a long—

a long way off. I've just gone—I've just gone the round of Oberdorf.

TULPE.

Brought anything back ?

PLESCHKE.

Ay, ay, fine things—fine things. At the Precen-tor's—they gave me—gave me—five groschen, they did. And up at the inn—up—at the inn—I got—got a canful—ay, a canful of soup, that's what I got.

TULPE.

I'll heat it up at once. Give it here.

[She takes the tin out of the bundle, places it on the table, and continues to rummage in the bundle.]

PLESCHKE.

I've got—I've got—the stump of a sausage too. The butcher—Seipelt the butcher—gave—gave it me.

TULPE.

How much money have you got ?

PLESCHKE.

Three five-groschen pieces—ay, three five-groschen pieces—I think—I think it is.

TULPE.

Out with them, too. I'll keep 'em for you.

HETE.

[*Re-entering.*] A nice fool you to give her everything. [*She goes to the stove.*]

TULPE.

You mind your own business.

HANKE.

Why, he's her fancy man.

HETE.

Oh, good Lord! good Lord!

HANKE.

He must bring a bit of a present to his sweetheart. That's the proper thing.

PLESCHKE.

Do you go and make a fool—and make a fool—of whoever you like. Leave an old man—an old man—leave him in peace.

HETE.

[*Imitating PLESCHKE's manner of speaking.*] Old Pleschke—poor old Pleschke—he'll soon—he'll soon have stuttered himself dumb. Soon he won't be—he won't be—able to get a single word out.

PLESCHKE.

[*Threatening her with his stick.*] Now you—now
you—just hold your jaw.

HETE.

Who'll make me, hey?

PLESCHKE.

Now hold your—your jaw.

TULPE.

Go on! Give her one!

PLESCHKE.

Just you—hold your jaw.

HANKE.

Stop this nonsense.

PLESCHKE.

Leave me alone.

[HETE has taken refuge behind HANKE, and while he is busy protecting her from PLESCHKE, seizes the opportunity to snatch something, quick as lightning, out of his bag, and to run off with it. TULPE, who has observed her, shakes with laughter.]

HANNELE

HANKE.

I don't see nothing to laugh at.

TULPE.

[*Still laughing.*] There now! There now! Who could help laughing?

PLESCHKE.

Oh, Lord! Lord! just look!

TULPE.

You look to your bag, my man. Perhaps you won't find it as heavy as it was.

HANKE.

[*Turns and sees he has been made a fool of.*] The hussy! [*He rushes after HETE.*] Just let me catch you!

[*His footsteps are heard as he rushes upstairs, then sounds of a chase, and suppressed screaming.*]

PLESCHKE.

A devil of a wench! a devil of a wench!

[*He laughs in all possible keys. TULPE is also in fits of laughter. Suddenly a sound is heard as of the outer door being thrown violently open. Both break off in their laughter.*]

PLESCHKE.

Hey? What was that?

[Violent gusts of wind hurtle against the house. Hard frozen snow is dashed against the window panes. A moment's calm ensues. Now appears the Schoolmaster, GOTTWALD, a man of two-and-thirty, with a black beard, carrying in his arms HANNELE MATTERN, a girl of about fourteen. Her long red hair hangs loose over the Schoolmaster's coat. She moans incessantly. Her face is hidden against the Schoolmaster's shoulder, her arms droop limp and lifeless. She has been scantily dressed and wrapped in odds and ends. GOTTWALD, ignoring the presence of the others, carefully deposits his burden upon the bed that stands against the wall on the right. SEIDEL, a forester, has also entered, with a lantern in his hand. He carries, besides a saw and axe, a bundle of wet rags, and has an old hunting-hat somewhat jauntily placed upon his head. His hair is very grey.]

PLESCHKE.

[Staring in stupid astonishment.] Hey, hey, hey, hey! What's all this? what's all this?

HANNELE

GOTTWALD.

[*Spreading coverings and his own cloak over the girl.*]
Heat some bricks, Seidel! Quick! quick!

SEIDEL.

Look alive now, look alive! A couple of bricks!
Hullo, hullo! Come, bustle about there!

TULPE.

What's the matter with her?

SEIDEL.

Oh, there's no time for questions.

[*Goes quickly out with TULPE.*]

GOTTWALD.

[*Soothingly, to HANNELE.*] There now, there now!
Don't be afraid—no one will hurt you.

HANNELE.

[*Her teeth chattering.*] I'm so frightened! I'm so
frightened!

GOTTWALD.

You've nothing at all to be afraid of. No one will
do anything to you.

HANNELE.

My father! my father!—

GOTTWALD.

But he's not here.

HANNELE.

I'm so frightened for fear father should come.

GOTTWALD.

But he isn't coming. Believe me, he isn't.

[Some one is heard to come rushing down the stairs.]

HETE.

[Holding up a grater.] Just look here! This is the sort of present they give Hanke.

[HANKE, who has come tearing in after her, catches her and tries to wrest the grater from her, but with a rapid movement she throws it so that it falls in the middle of the floor.]

HANNELE.

[Starting up in terror.] He's coming! he's coming!

[Half sitting up, she stares in the direction of the noise with her head stretched forward, and with an expression of intense dread on her pale, sickly, grief-worn face. HETE has made her escape from HANKE and has rushed into the back room. HANKE comes forward to pick up the grater.]

HANKE.

I'll polish you with it! Just you look out!

GOTTWALD.

[*To HANNELE.*] There's nothing to fear, Hannele.
[*To HANKE.*] What do you want?

HANKE.

[*Astonished.*] Me? What do I want?

HETE.

[*Sticks her head in at the door and calls:*] Who stole the grater? Who stole the grater?

HANKE.

[*Threateningly.*] Just you wait; I'll pay you out no fear!

GOTTWALD.

Please make as little noise as you can; the girl is ill.

HANKE.

[*Has picked up the grater and put it in his pocket. He retreats somewhat abashed.*] What's all the trouble?

SEIDEL.

[*Re-enters, carrying two bricks.*] Here's something in the meantime,

GOTTWALD.

[*Touching the bricks to try their warmth.*] Are they hot enough already?

SEIDEL.

They'll warm her a little, anyway.

[*He places one of the bricks under the girl's feet.*]

GOTTWALD.

[*Pointing out another place.*] The other one here.

SEIDEL.

She isn't the least bit warmer yet.

GOTTWALD.

She's positively shuddering with cold.

[*TULPE has come in after SEIDEL, HETE and PLESCHKE following her. Some other paupers, doubtful-looking characters, appear at the door. They are all full of curiosity, whispering together; their whispers grow gradually louder, and they edge their way forward.*]

TULPE.

[*Standing close to the bed, with her arms akimbo.*]
Brandy and hot water, if you have any.

SEIDEL.

[*Produces a flask, as do PLESCHKE and HANKE.*]
There's a drop left here.

TULPE.

[*Already at the stove.*] Give it here.

SEIDEL.

Have you hot water?

TULPE.

Oh, Lord! yes, enough to boil an ox.

GOTTWALD.

And put a little sugar in, if you have any.

HETE.

How should the likes of us have sugar?

TULPE.

Why, you have some. Don't speak like a fool.

HETE.

Me? Sugar? No, I haven't.

[*With a forced laugh.*]

TULPE.

I know you brought some back with you. Didn't I see it in your bundle just now? You needn't be telling lies about it,

SEIDEL.

Come along, out with it.

HANKE.

Run, Hete, run !

SEIDEL.

Can't you see how ill the girl is ?

HETE.

[*Stubbornly.*] Oh, what do I care !

PLESCHKE.

Fetch the sugar.

HETE.

You can go to the grocer's for it. [*Slinks out.*]

SEIDEL.

Yes, it's high time for you to be off, else I'd warm your ears for you. I'd give you something, so that I don't think you'd come back for more.

PLESCHKE.

[*Who has gone out for a moment, returns.*] That's the sort of girl she is—the sort of girl she is.

SEIDEL.

I'd soon knock the nonsense out of her. If I were the Overseer, I'd take a good stout cudgel to her, and,

mark my words, she'd soon find work to do. A girl like that—a strapping young hussy!—what has she to do loafing about the Refuge?

PLESCHKE.

Here I've got—a little bit—a little bit of sugar. I've just—I've just—found it.

HANKE.

[*Snuffing up the scent of the brandy and water.*] My word, don't I wish *I* was ill!

SCHMIDT, *the parish officer, enters carrying a lantern.*

SCHMIDT.

[*In an official yet familiar manner.*] Make way there! Here comes the Overseer.

Overseer BERGER enters. Clearly recognisable as a captain in the reserve. A small moustache. His face is still young and has a kindly expression, but his hair is already very grey. He wears a long cloak, and there is a touch of the dandy about him. He carries a stick, and wears his hat on one side, with a certain air. There is something of a swagger in his whole bearing.

THE PAUPERS.

Good evening, Mr. Overseer! Good evening, Captain!

BERGER.

'Evening! [*He lays down his hat, stick and cloak. With an expressive gesture.*] Now clear out of this!
[SCHMIDT motions the PAUPERS out, and forces them into the back room.

BERGER.

Good evening, Mr. Gottwald. [*Shakes hands with him.*] Well, what's the matter here?

GOTTWALD.

We've just got her out of the water.

SEIDEL.

[*Steps forward.*] By your leave, Mr. Overseer. [*From old military habit, he salutes with his hand to his forehead.*] You see I had some business at the smithy. I wanted to have a band round my axe-haft. And just as I came out of the smithy—I mean Jeuchner's smithy down there—you know there's a pond—you might almost call it a kind of a lake. [*To GOTTWALD.*] Yes, it's true; it's big enough for that. And like enough, you know, Mr. Overseer, there's one spot in it that doesn't freeze; it's never been known to freeze right over. When I was quite a little boy——

BERGER.

Well, well, come to the point!

SEIDEL.

[*Again saluting.*] Well, as I was saying, as I came out of the smithy, just then the moon broke through the clouds a bit, and I heard a sort of a moaning. First I thought it was just some one playing me a trick, but presently I saw that there was something in the pond—in the open spot, I mean. I hollered out, but it disappeared. Well, I—you may guess I tore into the smithy and got hold of a board, and I never spoke a word, but just rushed round the pond, out with the board on the ice, and then, before you could say one, two, three, there I was out upon it and had her fast by her hair.

BERGER.

Come now, that's better, Seidel. Generally, when I hear of you, it's something to do with fighting, and bloody heads and broken bones. This is a very different affair. And then you brought her straight here ?

SEIDEL.

The Schoolmaster, you see——

GOTTWALD.

I happened to be passing. I was coming from the teachers' meeting. First I took her home to my house, and my wife managed to find some clothes, so

that she might at least have something dry on her.

BERGER.

But what can have put it into her head?

SEIDEL.

[*With some hesitation.*] Well, you see, she's Mattern the mason's step-daughter.

BERGER.

[*With a slight movement of surprise.*] Whose did you say? That scoundrel's!

SEIDEL.

The mother died six weeks ago—and you can guess the rest. She scratched me and struck out at me only because she thought I was her father.

BERGER.

[*Murmurs.*] The hound!

SEIDEL.

He's down at Niederkretscham at this very moment; he's been sitting soaking there ever since yesterday. The people there let him have as much as ever he likes.

BERGER.

We'll make the scoundrel pay dear for this. [*He stoops over the bed to speak to HANNELE.*] Come, my

girl, speak to me. Don't moan so, and don't look at me in that scared way. I won't do anything to you. Tell me, what's your name? What do you say? I couldn't hear you. [*He stands erect.*] I believe the girl's a little stubborn.

GOTTWALD.

She's only terrified. Hannele!

HANNELE.

[*Whispers.*] Yes.

GOTTWALD.

You must answer the Overseer.

HANNELE.

[*Shivering.*] Dear God! I'm cold!

SEIDEL.

[*Coming forward with the brandy and water.*] Come now, drink a little of this.

HANNELE.

[*As before.*] Dear God! I'm hungry!

GOTTWALD.

[*To the Overseer.*] And when we offer her anything she won't eat it.

HANNELE.

Dear God! it hurts me so!

GOTTWALD.

What hurts you ?

HANNELE.

I'm so afraid.

BERGER.

Who's been hurting you ? Who ? Come now, speak out. I don't understand a word, my dear child. This won't do, you know. Listen, my good girl : has your stepfather been ill-using you ?—I mean has he beaten you ? locked you in ? turned you out of doors, or anything of that sort, eh ? Why, good heavens——

SEIDEL.

The girl's very silent. Things have got to be very bad indeed before she'll say a word. You see, in a manner of speaking, she's as mute as a mackerel.

BERGER.

I only want to have something definite to act upon. Perhaps I can get hold of the rascal this time.

GOTTWALD.

She's beside herself with terror of the fellow.

SEIDEL.

You see it's nothing new, all this. Every one, as you might say—every one knows all about it ; you

can ask whoever you please. The wonder is that the girl's still alive; you wouldn't think it possible.

BERGER.

What has he done to her, then?

SEIDEL.

Well, you see, all manner of things, as you might say. He'll drive her out of the house at nine at night, even in weather like this, and he won't let her back again unless she brings at least a five-groschen piece with her—for him to go and drink it, of course. Where was the child to find five groschen? Many's the time she's been out half the night, and then, when she came home and brought no money—well, it's made people come running out from all quarters to hear how she shrieked—how she bellowed, as you might say.

GOTTWALD.

Her mother was a little bit of protection to her while she lived.

BERGER.

Well, in any case, I'll have the rascal arrested. His name's been for years on the list of habitual drunkards. Come now, my child, just look at me.

HANNELE.

[*Imploringly.*] Oh, no, no, no!

SEIDEL.

You won't find it so easy to get anything out of her.

GOTTWALD.

[*Gently.*] Hannele!

HANNELE.

Yes.

GOTTWALD.

Do you know me?

HANNELE.

Yes.

GOTTWALD.

Who am I?

HANNELE.

The—the Schoolmaster—Mr. Gottwald.

GOTTWALD.

That's right. Well, now, you know I only want to be kind to you, so you can tell me all about it. You were down at the smithy pond. Why didn't you stop at home? Well, why didn't you?

HANNELE.

I'm so frightened.

BERGER.

We'll stand right back. Now, you just tell the Schoolmaster all about it, quite alone.

HANNELE.

[*Shyly and mysteriously.*] He called to me.

GOTTWALD.

Who called?

HANNELE.

The dear Lord Jesus.

GOTTWALD.

Where did the dear Lord Jesus call to you?

HANNELE.

Out of the water.

GOTTWALD.

Where?

HANNELE.

Down there in the water.

BERGER.

[*Seized with a new idea, puts on his cloak.*] The first thing to be done is to send for the Doctor. I daresay he's still to be found at the inn.

GOTTWALD.

I sent at once to the Sisters of Mercy. The child will certainly need nursing.

BERGER.

I'll go and tell the Doctor. [*To SCHMIDT.*] You bring the police officer to me. I'll wait at the inn. Good night, Mr. Gottwald. We'll have the fellow under lock and key this very night.

[*He goes out with SCHMIDT. HANNELE falls asleep.*]

SEIDEL.

[*After a pause.*] He'll take care not to catch him.

GOTTWALD.

Why should he do that?

SEIDEL.

He knows why. Who do you think is the child's father?

GOTTWALD.

Oh, Seidel, that's all mere gossip.

SEIDEL.

You know quite well he was the woman's lover.

GOTTWALD.

Oh, people don't mind what lies they tell. You can't believe half you hear. If only the Doctor would come!

SEIDEL.

[*In a low voice.*] I don't believe she'll ever get up again.

DOCTOR WACHLER *enters. A grave-looking man of about thirty-four.*

THE DOCTOR.

Good evening.

GOTTWALD.

Good evening.

SEIDEL.

[*Helping the DOCTOR to take off his fur coat.*] Good evening, Doctor.

THE DOCTOR.

[*Warming his hands at the stove.*] I should like another candle. [*The sound of a barrel-organ is heard from the back room.*] They're surely out of their senses in there.

SEIDEL.

[*Who has opened the door of the back room.*] Will you just be quiet in there, please?

[*The noise ceases.* SEIDEL *disappears into the back room.*

THE DOCTOR.

Mr. Gottwald, I believe?

GOTTWALD.

My name is Gottwald.

THE DOCTOR.

She tried to drown herself, I hear.

GOTTWALD.

She must have been driven to desperation.

[*A short pause.*]

THE DOCTOR.

[*Going up to the bed and looking at her.*] She seems to be talking in her sleep.

HANNELE.

Millions of little stars! [Dr. WACHLER and GOTTWALD listen. *The moonlight falls through the window and illumines the group.*] Why are you pulling at my arms! Oh, oh! the pain is killing me.

THE DOCTOR.

[*Carefully loosening her shirt at the throat.*] Her whole body seems to be covered with scars.

SEIDEL.

[*Who has returned.*] So was her mother's, as she lay in her coffin.

THE DOCTOR.

Pitiful! pitiful!

HANNELE.

[*In an altered stubborn tone.*] I won't! I won't! I

won't go home! I must go—to Mother Hollie*—in the pond. Let me go, father. Ouf! what a smell! You've been drinking brandy again! Hark! how the wind roars in the wood! There was a tree blown down this morning on the hill. If only no fire breaks out——! Unless the tailor has a stone in his pocket and an iron in his hand, the storm will sweep him away right over the mountains. Hark! hark to the storm!

MARTHA, *the Sister of Mercy enters.*

GOTTWALD.

Good evening Sister.

[THE SISTER *nods.*

[GOTTWALD *goes up to the Sister of Mercy, who is making her preparations, and speaks to her in the background.*

HANNELE.

Where is my mother? In heaven? Oh dear, so far, far away! [*She opens her eyes, looks around bewildered, passes her hand over her eyes, and says, almost inaudibly:*] Where—where am I?

THE DOCTOR.

[*Bending over her.*] Among kind people.

HANNELE.

I'm thirsty.

* A witch or ogress in German nursery-tales.

THE DOCTOR.

Water.

[SEIDEL, *who has brought a second candle, goes to fetch water.*

THE DOCTOR.

Have you any pain anywhere? [HANNELE *shakes her head.*] No? Oh, well then, there's not so much the matter with us!

HANNELE.

Are you the Doctor?

THE DOCTOR.

Of course I am.

HANNELE.

Then—then I must be ill.

THE DOCTOR.

A little; not very.

HANNELE.

Do you want to make me well again?

THE DOCTOR.

[*Rapidly examining her.*] Have you a pain here? or there? Do you feel anything here? here? here? Don't look so frightened, I'm not going to hurt you. How is it here? Have you any pain here?

HANNELE

GOTTWALD.

[*Coming up to the bed again.*] Answer the Doctor, Hannele !

HANNELE.

[*In a tone of intense entreaty, her voice trembling with tears.*] Oh, dear Mr. Gottwald !

GOTTWALD.

Now attend to what the Doctor says and answer him nicely. [HANNELE *shakes her head.*] Why won't you.

HANNELE.

Because—because—I want so to go to mother.

GOTTWALD.

[*Touched, strokes her hair.*] There, there now—you mustn't think of that.

[*A short pause. The DOCTOR stands erect, draws a long breath, and is plunged in thought for a moment. SISTER MARTHA has taken the second candle from the table, and holds it by the bed.*

THE DOCTOR.

[*Beckons to SISTER MARTHA.*] A word with you, please.

[*He goes with her to the table and gives her some whispered directions.* GOTTWALD

takes his hat and stands waiting, looking now at HANNELE, now at the DOCTOR and SISTER MARTHA.

THE DOCTOR.

[*Ending his whispered conversation with SISTER MARTHA.*] I'll come again by-and-by, and meantime I'll send the medicine. [*To GOTTWALD.*] I hear they've arrested him at the Sword Inn.

THE SISTER.

At least so I heard them say.

THE DOCTOR.

[*Putting on his fur coat. To SEIDEL.*] Will you come with me to the druggist's?

[*The DOCTOR, GOTTWALD, and SEIDEL nod to SISTER MARTHA as they pass out quietly.*

GOTTWALD.

[*Anxiously.*] What do you think of her, Doctor?
[*All three go out.*]

[*SISTER MARTHA is now alone with HANNELE. She pours some milk into a little bowl. As she is doing so, HANNELE opens her eyes and gazes at her.*

HANNELE.

Do you come from the Lord Jesus?

THE SISTER.

What do you say?

HANNELE.

Do you come from the Lord Jesus?

THE SISTER.

Don't you know me, Hannele? I'm Sister Martha, you know. You used to come to us, don't you remember? We used to play together, and sing beautiful songs. Don't you remember?

HANNELE.

[*Nods joyfully.*] Oh, the beautiful songs!

THE SISTER.

Now I'm going to nurse you, please God, until you're quite well again.

HANNELE.

I don't want to be well again.

THE SISTER.

[*With a bowl of milk at her side.*] The Doctor says that you're to take some milk, so as to get strong.

HANNELE.

[*Refusing it.*] I don't want to get well again.

THE SISTER.

You don't want to get well again? Come now, just think a little. Wait a moment, let me tie up your hair for you. [*She does so.*]

HANNELE.

[*Crying softly.*] I won't get well again.

THE SISTER.

Why not?

HANNELE.

I want so much—so much—to go to heaven.

THE SISTER.

That's not within our power, my dear child. We must wait till God calls us. But if you repent your sins——

HANNELE.

[*Eagerly.*] Oh, Sister! I *do* repent them.

THE SISTER.

And believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

HANNELE.

Oh, I believe so firmly in my Saviour——

THE SISTER.

Then you can wait in peace and full assurance,

Now I'll put your pillow right for you, and you'll go to sleep.

HANNELE.

I can't sleep.

THE SISTER.

Only try to.

HANNELE.

Sister Martha!

THE SISTER.

Well!

HANNELE.

Sister Martha! Are there sins—are there sins that can't be forgiven?

THE SISTER.

Now go to sleep, Hannele. Don't excite yourself.

HANNELE.

Oh, tell me, please, please tell me!

THE SISTER.

Well, yes, there *are* such sins—sins against the Holy Ghost.

HANNELE.

Oh, if I should have committed one!

THE SISTER.

Oh, nonsense! It's only very, very wicked people that have done that—like Judas, who betrayed the Lord Jesus.

HANNELE.

Yet it might be—it might be!

THE SISTER.

Now you must sleep.

HANNELE.

I'm so afraid.

THE SISTER.

You haven't the least reason to be.

HANNELE.

What if I should have committed such a sin!

THE SISTER.

But you haven't done anything of the sort.

HANNELE.

[*Clinging to the SISTER and staring into the darkness.*] Oh, Sister, Sister!

THE SISTER.

There's nothing to be afraid of.

HANNELE.

Sister!

HANNELE

THE SISTER.

What is it ?

HANNELE.

He's coming right in. Don't you hear.

THE SISTER.

I hear nothing at all.

HANNELE.

That's his voice—outside. Listen !

THE SISTER.

Who do you mean ?

HANNELE.

My father, my father ? There he is !

THE SISTER.

Where ?

HANNELE.

Look there !

THE SISTER.

Where ?

HANNELE.

At the foot of the bed.

THE SISTER.

There's a cloak and hat hanging here. We'll take away the ugly things; we'll take them out to Father Pleschke. Now I'll get some water and make a cold compress for you. You'll let me leave you alone just one moment? But you must lie quiet—quite still and quiet.

HANNELE.

Oh, how stupid I am! It was only a cloak, was it, and a hat?

THE SISTER.

Now quite, quite still; and I'll be back immediately. [*She goes, but has to turn back, for it is pitch dark in the passage.*] I'll place the candle out here in the passage. [*Again shaking her finger threateningly but kindly at HANNELE.*] Now quite, quite quiet.

[*She goes. It is almost entirely dark. Immediately there appears at the foot of HANNELE'S bed the form of MATTERN, the mason. A drunken, dissolute face, bristly red hair, upon which is placed a shabby military cap without any peak. He carries his mason's tools in his left hand. He has a strap wound round his right wrist, and remains all the time in a threatening attitude, as though ready at any moment to strike at*

HANNELE. *A pale light emanates from the apparition, illuminating HANNELE'S bed and its immediate surroundings.*

[HANNELE covers her eyes with her hands in terror, groans, writhes in the bed, and makes low moaning sounds.]

THE APPARITION.

[*In a hoarse voice, full of suppressed fury.*] Where are you? Where have you been girl? What have you been doing? I'll teach you! I'll pay you out, trust me for that. What have you been saying to people? That I've beaten you and ill-used you, hey? Is that what you've told them? You're not my child. Come now, get up out of that? I've nothing to do with you. I could turn you out into the streets. Get up and light the fire!—do you hear me? I've taken you in out of pity and charity, and now you think you're to lie there and do nothing. Well, are you going to move? I'll beat you till, till——

[HANNELE, with closed eyes, has struggled out of bed, and has dragged herself to the stove. She opens the stove door and sinks to the ground, fainting. At this moment SISTER MARTHA returns with the candle and a jug of water, and the hallucination vanishes. The SISTER starts, sees HANNELE lying among the ashes, and utters a cry of

terror: "Good God!" She puts down the candle and the jug, runs to HANNELE, and raises her head. Her cry brings the PAUPERS to the room.

THE SISTER.

I just went to fetch some water, and here she's gone and got out of bed. Do, Hedwig, please, come and help me!

HANKE.

Now, Hete, you had better be careful, or you'll do her an injury.

PLESCHKE.

I believe—I believe there's something—something more than we think—the matter with the girl, Sister!

TULPE.

Maybe—maybe the girl's bewitched.

HANKE.

[*Loudly.*] She won't last long—take my word for it.

THE SISTER.

[*Has put HANNELE back into bed, with HEDWIG'S*

help.] Perhaps you're right, my man; but surely you can see we mustn't excite the poor child any more.

HANKE.

Well, we're not doing any harm.

PLESCHKE.

[*To HANKE.*] You're a blockhead—just a blockhead—you're a blockhead, let me tell you—and nothing—nothing else. Any child knows that a sick person—a sick person—mustn't be disturbed.

HETE.

[*Mimicking him.*] A sick person—a sick person——

THE SISTER.

Now do, do go. I beg you to.

TULPE.

The sister's right. You'd better get out of this.

HANKE.

We'll go without telling, just when we want to.

HETE.

I suppose we've got to sleep in the hen-house?

PLESCHKE.

There'll be room for you—room for you—you know where.

[*The PAUPERS all go out.*]

HANNELE.

[*Opens her eyes apprehensively.*] Has—has he gone.

THE SISTER.

The people have all gone. Did anything frighten you, Hannele?

HANNELE.

[*Still apprehensive.*] Has father gone?

THE SISTER.

He was never here.

HANNELE.

Yes, Sister, he was.

THE SISTER.

You must have dreamed it.

HANNELE.

[*With a deep sigh, praying in a low voice.*] Oh, dear Lord Jesus! oh, dear Lord Jesus! Oh, good, kind, blessed Lord Jesus, take me to Thee, oh, take me to Thee! [*Changing her tone.*]

“Oh! come to me, dear;
Oh! take me from here,
Away from the people—
Their glances I fear.”

I'm quite sure of it, Sister.

HANNELE

THE SISTER.

What are you sure of ?

HANNELE.

He has promised me. I shall go to heaven, he has promised me.

THE SISTER.

H'm.

HANNELE.

Do you know who?

THE SISTER.

Well !

HANNELE.

[*Whispering into the SISTER's ear.*] The dear Lord—Gottwald.

THE SISTER.

Now you must go to sleep, Hannele—you really must.

HANNELE.

Sister, tell me—my Master, Mr. Gottwald—isn't he a handsome man? His name is Heinrich. Heinrich is a pretty name, isn't it? [*Fervently.*] You dear, sweet Heinrich ! Sister, shall I tell you something ? We're going to be married ! Yes, yes, we two—my Master, Mr. Gottwald, and I :

“And when they now their troth had plight,
They laid them down together,
Beneath a snow-white feather quilt,
All in a darksome bower.”

He has a lovely beard. [*In ecstasy.*] His hair is like
flowering clover. Hark! he's calling to me. Don't
you hear?

THE SISTER.

Go to sleep, Hannele, go to sleep; no one is call-
ing.

HANNELE.

It was the Lord Jesus. Hark! hark! Now he's
calling to me again—"Hannele!" quite loud—
"Hannele!" quite, quite clear. Come, come with me,
Sister!

THE SISTER.

When God calls me, I shall be ready.

HANNELE.

[*Now again in the full moonlight, stretches forward
her head, as if inhaling sweet odours.*] Don't you smell
anything, Sister?

THE SISTER.

No, Hannele.

HANNELE.

Don't you smell the lilac-flower? [*In an ever-
increasing blissful ecstasy.*] Oh, listen! oh, do listen!

What can it be ? [*A sweet voice becomes audible, as if from a far distance.*] Is it the angels ? Don't you hear ?

THE SISTER.

Yes, yes, I hear ; but listen now, you must turn on your side and lie still, and sleep quietly till to-morrow morning.

HANNELE.

Can you sing it, too ?

THE SISTER.

What, my child ? .

HANNELE.

“ Sleep, baby, sleep.”

THE SISTER.

Do you want to hear it ?

HANNELE.

[*Lies back in bed and strokes the SISTER's hand.*] Mother dear, sing it to me ! mother dear, sing it to me !

THE SISTER.

[*Puts out the light, bends over the bed, and speaks with a slight indication of the melody, while the distant music continues.*

“ Sleep, baby, sleep,

The hills are white with sheep—

[*She now sings, and the room gets quite dark.*

The curly little lammikin
Is nestling to its mammikin—
Sleep, baby sleep."

[A faint light now fills the room. On the side of the bed, bending forward and supporting herself on her bare, lean arms, sits a pale, ghostly figure of a woman. She is barefooted; her long white hair hangs unbound from her temples, and reaches the coverlid of the bed. Her face is worn with grief and toil: her deep-sunken eyes appear, although tightly closed, to be turned upon the sleeping HANNELE. Her voice is monotonous, like that of a somnambulist. Before she utters a word, she moves her lips, as though in preparation for it. She seems to drag the sounds with difficulty from the depths of her breast. She is prematurely aged, hollow-cheeked, emaciated, and very poorly clad.]

THE FIGURE.

Hannele!

HANNELE.

[Also with her eyes closed.] Mother, dear little mother, is that you?

THE FIGURE.

Yes. I have washed our dear Saviour's feet with my tears and dried them with the hairs of my head!

*HANNELE**HANNELE.*

Do you bring me good tidings ?

THE FIGURE.

Yes.

HANNELE

Do you come from far !

THE FIGURE.

A hundred thousand miles through the night.

HANNELE.

Mother, what do you look like !

THE FIGURE.

Like the children of this world.

HANNELE.

Your teeth are as lilies of the valley ; your voice is like a peal of bells !

THE FIGURE.

But its tones are not pure.

HANNELE.

Mother, dear mother ! how you shine in your beauty !

THE FIGURE.

The angels in heaven are many hundred times fairer.

HANNELE.

Why are you not as fair as they ?

THE FIGURE.

I have suffered because of your suffering.

HANNELE.

Little mother, stay with me !

THE FIGURE.

[*Rises.*] I must go.

HANNELE.

Is it beautiful where you are ?

THE FIGURE.

Wide, wide meadows, sheltered from the wind,
shielded from storm and hail by the care of God.

HANNELE.

Do you rest when you are weary.

THE FIGURE.

Yes.

HANNELE.

Have you food to eat when you are hungry ?

THE FIGURE.

I still my hunger with fruits and meat. I thirst,
and I drink golden wine. [*She recedes.*]

*HANNELE**HANNELE.*

Are you going mother ?

THE FIGURE.

God calls me.

HANNELE.

Does God call loud ?

THE FIGURE.

God calls loudly for me.

HANNELE.

My heart is burnt up within me, mother !

THE FIGURE.

God will cool it with roses and lilies.

HANNELE.

Will God save me ?

THE FIGURE.

Do you know the flower that I hold in my hand ?

HANNELE.

A cowslip.

THE FIGURE.

What do the people call it ?

HANNELE.

The key of heaven.

THE FIGURE.

[*Places it in HANNELE'S hand.*] You are to keep it
as a pledge from God. Farewell !

HANNELE.

Little mother, stay with me ?

THE FIGURE.

[*Receding.*] A little while, and ye shall not see me ;
and again a little while, and ye shall see me.

HANNELE.

I am afraid.

THE FIGURE.

[*Receding still further.*] As the wind scatters the
white snow-dust on the mountain, so will God pursue
them that persecute you.

HANNELE.

Do not leave me.

THE FIGURE.

The children of heaven are like the blue lightnings
of the night.—Sleep !

[*Once more it becomes gradually dark. Mean-
while pleasant boys' voices are heard singing
the second verse of the song, " Sleep, baby,
sleep."*

" Sleep, baby, dear !

What guests are drawing near ?

[*The room is now all of a sudden filled with a gold-green radiance. Three ANGELS OF LIGHT appear, beautiful winged youths, with rose-wreaths on their heads—who sing the end of the song, reading it from long scrolls of music, which hang down on both sides. Neither SISTER MARTHA nor the MOTHER'S FIGURE is to be seen.*

“The guests that come to visit thee
Are God's dear little angels three—
Sleep, baby, dear!”

HANNELE.

[*Opens her eyes, gazes enraptured at the ANGELS, and says in astonishment.*] Angels! [*With growing wonder and irrepressible joy, but still not quite free from doubt.*] Angels!! [*In an ecstasy of delight.*] Angels!!!

[*A short pause, then the ANGELS in turn speak the following, to music:*

FIRST ANGEL.

The sun shedding gold on the hillsides
To thee gave no share of its riches;
The soft-waving green of the valley,
It spread not its mantle for thee.

SECOND ANGEL.

The wealth of the gold-laden cornfields
The pangs of thy hunger appeased not;

The milk of the pasturing cattle,
It foamed not for thee in the pail.

THIRD ANGEL.

The blossoms of earth and its flowers,
All brimming with perfume and sweetness,
With purple and blue as of heaven
Aglow, never bordered thy path.

[*A short pause.*]

FIRST ANGEL.

We bring thee an earliest greeting,
Through blackness of darkness we bring it;
We waft from the plumes of our pinions
An earliest breath of joy.

SECOND ANGEL.

We bear on the hem of our garments
An earliest fragrance of springtime;
And, lo! on our lips is glowing
The earliest flush of the day.

THIRD ANGEL.

Behold! from our feet there shineth
The emerald light of our homeland;
The spires of the heavenly city,
They gleam in the depths of our eyes.

PART II

Everything is as it was before the appearance of the Angels. The SISTER OF MERCY is seated beside the bed in which HANNELE is lying. She re-lights the candle, and HANNELE opens her eyes. Her inward vision seems still to be present to her. Her features still wear an expression of heavenly rapture. As soon as she recognises the SISTER, she begins to speak with joyful eagerness.

HANNELE.

Sister! Angels!—Sister Martha! Angels!—Do you know who have been here?

THE SISTER.

H'm—are you awake again already?

HANNELE.

Just guess! Do! [*Unable to contain herself.*] Angels! Angels! Real angels! Angels from heaven, Sister Martha! Angels, you know, with long wings

THE SISTER.

Well then, if you've had such beautiful dreams——

HANNELE.

There now! She says I dreamt it! But look at what I've got here. Just look at it!

[She makes a motion as though she held a flower in her hand, and were showing it to the SISTER.]

THE SISTER.

What is it?

HANNELE.

Just look at it!

THE SISTER.

H'm.

HANNELE.

Here it is—look at it!

THE SISTER.

Aha!

HANNELE.

Just smell it.

THE SISTER.

[Pretending to smell a flower.] H'm, lovely.

HANNELE.

Not so close to it! You'll break the stalk.

HANNELE

THE SISTER.

Oh, I'm very sorry. What sort of flower is it?

HANNELE.

Why, don't you know. The key of heaven.

THE SISTER.

Is it, really?

HANNELE.

Why, surely you're—— Do bring the light—quick, quick!

THE SISTER.

[*Holding up the candle.*] Ah, yes, now I see it.

HANNELE.

Isn't it lovely.

THE SISTER.

But you're talking a great deal too much. We must keep quite quiet now, or the Doctor will scold us. And here he has sent you your medicine. We must take it, as he bids us.

HANNELE.

Oh, Sister, you're far too much troubled about me! You don't know what has happened. Do you?—do you?—do tell me, if you know. Who gave me this? Well? The little golden key? Who? Say! What is the little golden key meant to open? Well?

THE SISTER.

You'll tell me all about it to-morrow morning. Then, after a good night's rest, you'll be strong and well.

HANNELE.

But I *am* well. [*She sits up and puts her feet to the ground.*] You see, Sister, I'm quite, quite well!

THE SISTER.

Why, Hannele! No you mustn't do that—you really mustn't!

HANNELE.

[*Rising, and pushing the SISTER away, makes a few steps forward.*] You must—let me. You must—let me. I must—go. [*She starts in terror, and gazes fixedly at a certain point.*] Oh, heavenly Saviour!

[*A black-robed and black-winged ANGEL becomes visible. He is great, strong, and beautiful, and bears a long serpentine sword, the hilt of which is draped in black gauze. Grave and silent he sits beside the stove and gazes at HANNELE, calmly and immovably. A white, dreamlike light fills the room.*]

HANNELE.

Who are you? [*No answer.*] Are you an angel? [*No answer.*] Is it to me you come? [*No answer.*]

I am Hannele Mattern. Is it to me you come?
[*No answer.*]

[SISTER MARTHA *has stood by, with folded hands, devoutly and humbly. Now she moves slowly out of the room.*]

HANNELE.

Has God taken the gift of speech from your tongue?
[*No answer.*] Do you come from God? [*No answer.*]
Are you a friend to me? Do you come as an enemy?
[*No answer.*] Have you a sword in the folds of your garment? [*No answer.*] B-r-r-r! I am cold. Piercing frost spreads from your wings; cold breathes around you. [*No answer.*] Who are you? [*No answer. A sudden horror overcomes her. She turns with a scream, as though some one stood behind her.*]
Mother! Little mother!

A FIGURE *in the dress of the Sister of Mercy but younger and more beautiful, with long white pinions, comes in.*

HANNELE.

[*Shrinking close up to the FIGURE and seizing her hand.*] Mother! Little mother! There is some one here.

THE SISTER.

Where?

HANNELE.

There, there!

THE SISTER.

Why are you trembling so?

HANNELE.

I'm frightened!

THE SISTER.

Fear nothing, I am with you.

HANNELE.

My teeth are chattering with terror. I can't help it. He makes me shudder!

THE SISTER.

Do not be frightened, he is your friend.

HANNELE.

Who is he, mother?

THE SISTER.

Do you not know him?

HANNELE.

Who is he?

THE SISTER.

Death.

HANNELE.

Death! [*She looks for awhile at the BLACK ANGEL, in awe-stricken silence.*] Must it be, then?

HANNELE

THE SISTER.

It is the entrance, Hannele.

HANNELE.

Must every one pass through the entrance?

THE SISTER.

Every one.]

HANNELE.

Will you grasp me hard, Death?—He is silent.
He makes no answer, mother, to anything I say.

THE SISTER.

The words of God are loud within you.

HANNELE.

I have often longed for you from the depths of my
heart; but now I am afraid.

THE SISTER.

Make you ready.

HANNELE.

To die?

THE SISTER.

Yes.

HANNELE.

[*After a pause, timidly.*] Must I lie in the coffin in
these rags and tatters?

THE SISTER.

God will clothe you.

[*She produces a small silver bell, and rings it. Immediately there appears, moving noiselessly—as do all the succeeding apparitions—a little humpbacked VILLAGE TAILOR, carrying over his arm a bridal gown, veil, and wreath, and in his hands a pair of glass slippers. He has a comical, halting gait. He bows in silence to the ANGEL, then to the SISTER, and last and lowest to HANNELE.*

THE TAILOR.

[*With a profusion of bows.*] Mistress Johanna Katharina Mattern—[*he clears his throat*—his Serene Highness, your most gracious Father, has condescended to order your bridal dress of me.

THE SISTER.

[*Takes the gown from the TAILOR and begins to dress HANNELE.*] Come, I will put it on for you.

HANNELE.

[*In joyful excitement.*] Oh, how it rustles!

THE SISTER.

White silk, Hannele.

HANNELE.

[*Looking down in rapture at the gown.*] Won't people be astonished to see me so beautifully dressed in my coffin?

THE TAILOR.

Mistress Johanna Katharina Mattern—[*clears his throat*]*—the whole village is talking of nothing but—*[*clears his throat*]*—what good fortune death is bringing you, Mistress Hanna* [*clears his throat.*] His Serene Highness—[*clears his throat*]*—your most gracious Father—*[*clears his throat*]*—has been to the Overseer——*

THE SISTER.

[*Placing the wreath on HANNELE's head.*] Now bend thy head, thou bride of heaven.

HANNELE.

[*Quivering with childish joy.*] Do you know, Sister Martha, I'm looking forward so to death. [*All of a sudden she looks dubiously at the SISTER.*] It is you, isn't it?

THE SISTER.

Yes.

HANNELE.

You are really Sister Martha? Oh, no! You are my mother?

THE SISTER.

Yes.

HANNELE.

Are you both?

THE SISTER.

The children of heaven are as one in God.

THE TAILOR.

If I might be permitted, Princess Hannele!
[Kneeling before her with the slippers.] These are the
 tiniest little slippers in the land. They have all
 too large feet—Hedwig, and Agnes, and Lisa, and
 Martha, and Minna, and Anna, and Kate, and
 Greta. *[He has put the slippers on her feet.]* They
 fit, they fit! The bride is found. Mistress Hannele
 has the smallest feet. If you should have any further
 orders—— Your servant, your servant!

. *[Goes off, bowing profusely.]*

HANNELE.

I can scarcely bear to wait, little mother.

THE SISTER.

Now you need not take any more medicine.

HANNELE.

No.

HANNELE

THE SISTER.

Now you'll soon be as fresh and sound as a mountain trout, Hannele !

HANNELE.

Yes.

THE SISTER.

Come now, and lay you down on your deathbed.

[She takes HANNELE'S hand and leads her gently to the bed, on which HANNELE lies down.]

HANNELE.

At last I shall know what it is to die.

THE SISTER.

Yes, you will, Hannele.

HANNELE.

[Lying on her back with her hands as if they were holding a flower.] I have a pledge.

THE SISTER.

Press it close to your breast.

HANNELE.

[With a renewal of dread, looking shrinkingly towards the ANGEL.] Must it be, then ?

THE SISTER.

It must.

*[From the far distance are heard the strains
of a funeral march.]*

HANNELE.

[Listening.] Now they're playing for the burial—
Meister Seyfried and the musicians. *[The ANGEL
rises.]* Now he stands up. *[The storm without has
increased. The ANGEL moves slowly and solemnly
towards HANNELE.]* Now he is coming to me. Oh,
Sister! mother! I can't see you! Where are you?
[To the ANGEL, imploringly.] Quick, quick, thou dumb
black spirit! *[As though groaning under an insup-
portable weight.]* It is crushing me, crushing me
—like a—like a stone. *[The ANGEL slowly raises his
great sword.]* He's going to—going to—destroy me
utterly. *[In an agony of terror.]* Help! help,
Sister!

THE SISTER.

*[Interposing with dignity between the ANGEL and
HANNELE, and laying both her hands in an attitude
of protection upon HANNELE's heart, speaks loftily,
solemnly, and with authority.]* He dare not! I lay
my consecrated hands upon thy heart!

*[The BLACK ANGEL disappears. Silence.
The SISTER folds her hands and looks
down upon HANNELE with a gentle smile;*

then she becomes absorbed in thought, and moves her lips in silent prayer. The strains of the funeral march have in the meantime continued without interruption. A sound as of many lightly pattering feet is heard. Presently the figure of the Schoolmaster, GOTTWALD, appears in the middle doorway. The funeral march ceases. GOTTWALD is dressed in black, as though for a funeral, and carries in his hand a bunch of beautiful lilies-of-the-valley. He has reverently taken off his hat and, while still on the threshold, turns to those who follow him, with a gesture commanding silence. Behind him appear his SCHOOL CHILDREN—boys and girls in their best clothes. In obedience to his gesture, they stop their whispering and remain quite silent. They do not venture to cross the threshold. With solemn mien, GOTTWALD now approaches the SISTER, who is still praying.

GOTTWALD.

[*In a low voice.*] Good day, Sister Martha!

THE SISTER.

Mr. Gottwald, God's greeting to you!

GOTTWALD.

[*Looking at HANNELE, shakes his head sadly and pityingly.*] Poor little thing!

THE SISTER.

Why are you so sad, Mr. Gottwald?

GOTTWALD.

Because she is dead.

THE SISTER.

We will not grieve for that; she has found peace and for her sake I am glad.

GOTTWALD.

[*Sighing.*] Yes, it is well with her. Now she is free from all trouble and sorrow!

THE SISTER.

[*Sunk in contemplation.*] How beautiful she looks as she lies there.

GOTTWALD.

Yes, beautiful. Now that you are dead, you bloom forth in all your loveliness!

THE SISTER.

God has made her so beautiful because she had faith in Him.

GOTTWALD.

Yes, she had faith and she was good.

*[He heaves a deep sigh, opens his hymn-book,
and looks sadly into it.]*

THE SISTER.

[Also looking into the hymn-book.] We must not mourn. We must be still and patient.

GOTTWALD.

Ah, my heart is heavy.

THE SISTER.

Because she is set free ?

GOTTWALD.

Because my two flowers are withered.

THE SISTER.

What flowers ?

GOTTWALD.

Two violets here in my book. They are the dead eyes of my dear Hannele.

THE SISTER.

In God's heaven they will bloom again far more sweetly.

GOTTWALD.

Oh, God ! how much longer will our pilgrimage last through this vale of darkness and of tears ?

[*With a sudden change, briskly and busily, producing sheets of music.*] What do you think? I thought we might begin, here in the house, by singing the hymn: "Jesus, oh, I trust in Thee."

THE SISTER.

Yes, that is a beautiful hymn; and Hannele Mat-tern's heart was full of faith.

GOTTWALD.

And then out in the churchyard we will sing "Set me free." [*He turns, goes to the SCHOOL CHILDREN and says:*] Number 62, "Set me free."

[*He intones softly, beating time:*

"Set me free, oh, set me free,
That I may my Jesus see."

[*The children have joined in softly.*

Children, are you all warmly dressed? It will be very cold out in the churchyard. Come in for a moment. Look at poor little Hannele once more. [*The CHILDREN crowd in and range themselves solemnly round the bed.*] Just see how beautiful Death has made the poor little girl! She was huddled in rags; now she wears silken raiment. She ran about bare-foot; now she has glass slippers on her feet. Soon she will dwell in a golden palace, and eat roast meat every day. Here she lived on cold potatoes, and often she had not enough of them. Here you always

called her the Beggar Princess ; now she will soon be a Princess in very deed. So if any of you have anything that you want to beg her pardon for, do it now, or she will tell the dear God all about it, and then it will go ill with you.

A LITTLE BOY.

[*Stepping forward.*] Dear Princess Hannele, don't be angry with me, and don't tell the dear God that I always called you the Beggar Princess.

ALL THE CHILDREN.

[*In a confused murmur.*] We are all so very, very sorry !

GOTTWALD.

So ! Now poor Hannele has already forgiven you. Now go into the other room and wait for me there.

THE SISTER.

Come, I'll take you into the back room, and there I'll tell you what you must do if you want to become beautiful angels, as beautiful as Hannele will soon be.

[*She leads the way, the CHILDREN follow her ;
the door is closed.*

GOTTWALD.

[*Now alone with HANNELE. He lays the flowers at her feet with emotion.*] Hannele, dear, here I've brought you another bunch of beautiful lilies-of-the-

valley. [*Kneeling by her bed, with trembling voice.*] Don't quite, quite forget me in your glory! [*He sobs, with his face buried in the folds of her dress.*] It breaks my heart to part from you.

[*Voices are heard ;* GOTTWALD rises and covers HANNELE with a sheet. Two OLD WOMEN, dressed for a funeral, with handkerchiefs and gilt-edged hymn-books in their hands, enter softly.

FIRST WOMAN.

[*Looking round.*] I suppose we're the first.

SECOND WOMAN.

No, the Schoolmaster is here already. Good day, Mr. Gottwald.

GOTTWALD.

Good day.

FIRST WOMAN.

Ah, this'll be a sore trouble to you, Mr. Gottwald ! She was such a good pupil to you—always industrious, always busy.

SECOND WOMAN.

Is it true what people are saying? Surely it can't be true? They say she took her own life?

A THIRD WOMAN.

[*Who has entered.*] That would be a sin against the Holy Spirit.

SECOND WOMAN.

A sin against the Holy Ghost.

THIRD WOMAN.

And the Pastor says such a sin can never be forgiven.

GOTTWALD.

Have you forgotten what the Saviour said?—"Suffer the little children to come unto me."

A FOURTH WOMAN.

[*Who has entered.*] Oh, good people, good people, what weather! It's enough to freeze the feet off you. I only hope the Pastor won't be too long about it! The snow is lying a yard deep in the churchyard.

A FIFTH WOMAN.

[*Entering.*] The Pastor is not going to bury her, good people! He's going to refuse her consecrated ground.

PLESCHKE.

[*Also appearing.*] Have you heard? have you heard? A grand gentleman has been to see the Pastor—has been to see the Pastor—and has told him—yes, told him—that Hannla Mattern is a blessed saint.

HANKE.

[*Entering hastily.*] Do you know what they're bringing?—A crystal coffin!

SEVERAL VOICES.

A crystal coffin! A crystal coffin!

HANKE.

Oh, Lord! It must have cost a pretty penny!

SEVERAL VOICES.

A crystal coffin! A crystal coffin!

SEIDEL.

[*Who has appeared.*] We're going to see fine things, that we are! An angel has passed right through the village, as tall as a poplar-tree, if you'll believe me. And two others are sitting by the smithy pond; but they're small, like little children. The girl was more than a beggar-girl.

SEVERAL VOICES.

"The girl was more than a beggar-girl." "They're bringing a crystal coffin." "An angel has passed through the village."

[*Four white-robed YOUTHS carry in a crystal coffin, which they set down near HANNELE'S bed. The MOURNERS whisper to each other full of curiosity and astonishment.*

HANNELE

GOTTWALD.

[*Raising the sheet a little from HANNELE'S face.*]
Look at the dead child, too.

FIRST WOMAN.

[*Peering curiously under the sheet.*] Why, her hair is like gold.

GOTTWALD.

[*Drawing the cloth right away from HANNELE, who is illumined with a pale light.*] And she has silken garments and glass slippers.

[*All shrink back as though dazzled, with exclamations of the utmost surprise.*]

SEVERAL VOICES.

"Ah, how beautiful she is!" "Who can it be?"
"Who can it be?" "Little Hannla Mattern?"
"Hannla Mattern?" "No, I don't believe it!"

PLESCHKE.

The girl—the girl—is a—a saint.

[*The four YOUTHS, with tender care, lay
HANNELE in the crystal coffin.*]

HANKE.

They say she isn't to be buried at all.

FIRST WOMAN.

Her coffin is to be set up in the church.

SECOND WOMAN.

I believe the girl isn't really dead. She looks as alive as ever she can be.

PLESCHKE.

Just give me—just give me—a down-feather. We'll try—we'll try—[*holding a down-feather to her mouth.*] Yes, and we'll see—and we'll see if she's still—if she's still breathing, we will. [*They give him a down-feather and he holds it to HANNELE'S mouth.*] It doesn't stir. The girl is dead! She hasn't a breath of life in her!

THIRD WOMAN.

I'll give her my bunch of rosemary.

[*She lays it in the coffin.*]

FOURTH WOMAN.

She can take my bit of lavender with her too.

FIFTH WOMAN.

But where is Mattern?

FIRST WOMAN.

Yes, where is Mattern?

SECOND WOMAN.

Oh, he—he's sitting over there in the ale-house,

FIRST WOMAN.

Most like he doesn't know a word of what has happened.

SECOND WOMAN.

He cares for nothing so long as he has his dram. He knows nothing about it.

PLESCHKE.

Haven't you—haven't you told him then—told him—that there's a death—in his house?

THIRD WOMAN.

He might know that without any telling.

FOURTH WOMAN.

I don't say anything, heaven forbid! But every one knows who has killed the girl.

SEIDEL.

You're right there! The whole village, as you might say, knows that. There's a lump on her as big as my fist.

FIFTH WOMAN.

No grass grows where that fellow sets his feet.

SEIDEL.

I was there when they changed her wet clothes, and I saw it as plain as I see you. She has a lump

on her as big as my fist—and that's what has killed her.

FIRST WOMAN.

It's Mattern must answer for her, and no one else.

ALL.

[*Speaking all at once and vehemently, but in a whisper.*] No one else, no one else.

SECOND WOMAN.

He's a murderer, he is.

ALL.

[*Full of fury, but in a low tone.*] A murderer, a murderer!

[*The harsh voice of the tipsy MATTERN is heard.*]

MATTERN'S VOICE.

"A con—science from all trou—ouble free.

What so—after pil—low can there be?"

[*He appears in the doorway and shouts.*] Hannele!

Hannele! You brat! Where are you hiding?

[*He staggers in, leaning against the door-jamb.*] I'll

count up to five—and I'll wait not a moment longer.

One, two—three and one are—I tell you, my girl,

you'd better not make me wild. If I have to search

for you and find you, you hussy, I'll pound you to a

jelly, I will! [*Starts, as he notices the others who are present, and who remain as still as death.*] What do you want here? [*No answer.*] How do you come here? Was it the devil sent you, eh? Just clear out of this, now! Well, are you going to stop all night? [*He laughs to himself.*] Wait a minute, wait a minute—I know what it is. It's nothing but that. I have a little too much in my noddle—that's what brings 'em. [*He sings.*]

“A con—science from all trou—ouble free,
What so—ofter pil—low can there be?”

[*Starts in fear.*] Are you still there? [*In a sudden outburst of fury, looking around for something to attack them with.*] I'll take the first thing that comes handy——

A MAN has entered, wearing a threadbare brown cloak. He is about thirty, has long black hair, and a pale face with the features of the Schoolmaster, GOTTWALD. He has a slouch hat in his left hand and sandals on his feet. He appears weary and travel-stained. He touches MATTERN lightly on the arm, interrupting his speech. MATTERN turns sharply round. The STRANGER looks him straight in the face, gravely and quietly.

THE STRANGER.

[*Humbly.*] Mattern, God's greeting to you?

MATTERN.

How have you come here? What do you want?

THE STRANGER.

[*In a tone of humble entreaty.*] I have walked till my feet are bleeding—give me water to wash them. The hot sun has parched me—give me wine to drink, and to refresh me. I have not broken bread since I set forth in the morning—I am hungry.

MATTERN.

What's that to me? What brings you tramping round here? Go and work. I have to work too.

THE STRANGER.

I am a workman.

MATTERN.

You're a tramp, that's what you are. A workman need not go about begging.

THE STRANGER.

I am a workman without wages.

MATTERN.

You're a tramp, you are.

THE STRANGER.

[*Diffidently, submissively, but at the same time impressively.*] I am a physician. It may be that you have need of me.

MATTERN.

I'm all right, I don't need any doctor.

THE STRANGER.

[*His voice trembling with inward emotion.*] Mattern, bethink you! You need give me no water, and yet I will heal you. You may give me no bread to eat, and yet, God helping me, I will make you whole.

MATTERN.

You get out of this! Go about your business. I have sound bones in my body. I need no doctor. Do you understand?

THE STRANGER.

Mattern, bethink you! I will wash your feet for you. I will give you wine to drink. You shall eat white bread. Tread me under foot, and yet, God helping me, I will make you whole and sound.

MATTERN.

Now, will you go or will you not? If you won't get out of this, I tell you I'll——

THE STRANGER.

[*In a tone of earnest admonition.*] Mattern, do you know what you have in your house?

MATTERN.

All that belongs there. All that belongs there. You don't belong there. Just get out now.

THE STRANGER.

[*Simply.*] Your daughter is ill.

MATTERN.

Her illness doesn't need any doctor. It's nothing but laziness, her illness isn't. I can knock that out of her without your help.

THE STRANGER.

[*Solemnly.*] Mattern, I come as a messenger to you.

MATTERN

As a messenger, eh? Who from?

THE STRANGER.

I come from the Father—and I go to the Father. What have you done with His child?

MATTERN.

How am I to know what's become of her? What have I to do with his children? He's never troubled about her, he hasn't.

THE STRANGER,

[*Firmly.*] You have death in your house.

MATTERN.

[*Now notices HANNELE lying there, goes in speechless astonishment up to the coffin, and looks into it; then*

murmurs:] Where have you got the beautiful clothes? Who has bought you the crystal coffin?

[*The MOURNERS whisper to each other vehemently but softly. The word "Murderer!" is heard again and again, uttered in a threatening tone.*

MATTERN.

[*Softly, trembling.*] I've never ill-used you. I've clothed you. I've fed you. [*Turning insolently upon the STRANGER.*] What do you want with me? What have I to do with all this?

THE STRANGER.

Mattern, have you anything to say to me?

[*The muttering among the MOURNERS grows ever more vehement and angry, and the word "Murderer!" "Murderer!" becomes more frequently audible*

THE STRANGER.

Have you nothing to reproach yourself with? Have you never torn her from her bed by night? Has she never fallen as though dead under your blows?

MATTERN.

[*Beside himself with rage.*] Strike me dead if she

has—here, on the spot! Heaven's lightning blast me
If I've been to blame!

*[A flash of pale blue lightning, and distant
thunder.]*

ALL.

[Speaking together.] “There's a thunderstorm
coming!” “Right in the middle of winter!” “He's
perjured himself!” “The child-murderer has perjured
himself!”

THE STRANGER.

[Impressively but kindly.] Have you still nothing
to say to me, Mattern?

MATTERN.

[In pitiable terror.] Who loves his child, chastens
it. I've done nothing but good to the girl. I've
kept her as my own child. I've a right to punish
her when she does wrong.

THE WOMEN.

[Advancing threateningly towards him.] Murderer!
Murderer! Murderer!

MATTERN.

She's lied to me and cheated me. She has robbed
me day by day.

THE STRANGER.

Are you speaking the truth?

HANNELE

MATTERN.

God strike me——

[*At this moment a cowslip—"the key of heaven"—is seen in HANNELE'S folded hands, emitting a yellow-green radiance. MATTERN stares at it as though out of his senses, trembling all over.*]

THE STRANGER.

Mattern, you are lying!

ALL:

[*In the greatest excitement.*] A miracle! a miracle

PLESCHKE.

The girl—the girl—is a—a saint. He has—he has—sworn away—body—body and soul.

MATTERN.

[*Shrieks*]. I'll go and hang myself!

[*Clasps his head between his hands and rushes off.*]

THE STRANGER.

[*Goes up to HANNELE'S coffin, and turns so as to face the others, who all draw back reverently from the FIGURE which now stands in full majesty, addressing them,*

Fear nothing. [*He bends down and takes hold of HANNELE's hand. He speaks with the deepest tenderness.*] The maiden is not dead, but sleepeth. [*With intensity and assured power.*] Johanna Mattern, arise!

[*A gold-green radiance fills the room. HANNELE opens her eyes, and raises herself by aid of the STRANGER's hand, but without daring to look in his face. She steps out of the coffin, and at once sinks to the ground at the feet of the Awakener. Terror seizes upon all the others, and they flee. The STRANGER and HANNELE remain alone. The brown mantle has slipped from his shoulders and he stands in a golden-white robe.*]

THE STRANGER.

[*Tenderly.*] Hannele!

HANNELE.

[*In an ecstasy, her head bowed as low as possible.*] He is there.

THE STRANGER.

Who am I?

HANNELE.

Thou!

THE STRANGER.

Name my name.

HANNELE

HANNELE.

[*Whispers, trembling with awe.*] Holy ! holy !

THE STRANGER.

I know all thy sorrows and thy sufferings.

HANNELE.

Thou dear, dear——

THE STRANGER.

Arise.

HANNELE.

Thy robe is spotless. I am full of stains.

THE STRANGER.

[*Laying his right hand on HANNELE'S head.*] Thus do I take away all baseness from thee. [*Raising her face towards him with gentle force, he touches her eyes.*] Behold, I bestow on thine eyes eternal light. Let them be filled with the light of countless suns ; with the light of endless day, from morning-glow to evening-glow, from evening-glow to morning-glow. Let them be filled with the brightness of all that shines : blue sea, blue sky, and the green plains of eternity. [*He touches her ear.*] Behold, I give to thine ear to hear all the rejoicing of all the millions of angels in the million heavens of God. [*He touches her lips.*] Behold,

I set free thy stammering tongue, and lay upon it thy soul, and my soul, and the soul of God in the Highest.

[HANNELE, *her whole body trembling, attempts to rise. As though weighed down by an infinite burden of rapture, she cannot do so. In a storm of sobs and tears, she buries her head on the STRANGER'S breast.*

THE STRANGER.

With these tears I wash from thy soul all the dust and anguish of the world. I will exalt thy feet above the stars of God.

[*To soft music, and stroking HANNELE'S hair with his hand, the STRANGER speaks as follows. As he is speaking ANGELIC FORMS appear in the doorway, great and small, youths and maidens ; they pause diffidently, then venture in, swinging censers and decorating the chamber with hangings and wreaths.*

THE STRANGER.

The City of the Blessed is marvellously fair.
And peace and utter happiness are never-ending there.

[*Harp, at first played softly, gradually ring out loud and clear.*

The houses are of marble, the roofs of gold so fine,

And down their silver channels bubble brooks of ruby wine.

The streets that shine so white, so white, are all bestrewn with flowers,

And endless peals of wedding bells ring out from all the towers,

The pinnacles, as green as May, gleam in the morning light,

Beset with flickering butterflies, with rose-wreaths decked and dight.

Twelve milk-white swans fly round them in mazy circles wide.

And preen themselves, and ruffle up their plumage in their pride;

They soar aloft so bravely through the shining heavenly air,

With fragrance all a-quiver and with golden trumpet-blare;

In circle-sweeps majestic for ever they are winging,

And the pulsing of their pinions is like harp-strings softly ringing.

They look abroad o'er Sion, on garden and on sea,

And green and filmy streamers behind them flutter free—

And underneath them wander, throughout the
heavenly land,
The people in their feast-array, for ever hand in
hand ;
And then into the wide, wide sea, filled with the red,
red wine,
Behold ! they plunge their bodies with glory all a-
shine—
They plunge their shining bodies into the gleaming
sea,
Till in the deep clear purple they're swallowed
utterly ;
And when again they leap aloft rejoicing from the
flood,
Their sins have all been washed away in Jesus' blessed
blood.

[*The STRANGER now turns to the ANGELS, who
have finished their work. They advance
with timid joy and rapture, and form a
half-circle round HANNELE and the
STRANGER.*

THE STRANGER.

Come, heaven's children, come with linen fine !
Dear ones, come hither ! come, my turtle-doves !
Softly enwrap the fragile outworn frame

That cold has racked and fever-glow has parched,
Heedful for fear ye hurt the tender flesh ;
Then sail ye forth on pulseless, sleeping wings,
Brushing the dewy meadow-grass, and bear her
Through the cool moonshine, lovingly along. . . .
Through fragrant blossom-breath of Paradise,
Till in the blissful temple-shade she rests.

[*A short pause.*]

There, while on silken bed she slumbers, mix
In the white marble bath the hill-brook's water
With purple wine and milk of antelopes,
Pure essences to lave her back to health.
Break from the bushes heavy sprays of bloom,
Jasmine and lilac, drenched with morning dews,
And let their sparkling charge of crystal drops,
Fragrant and quickening, rain down upon her.
Then, with the softest silk, dry limb by limb,
As tenderly as they were lily-leaves.
With wine refresh her, poured in golden goblets,
Wherein is pressed the flesh of mellow fruits—
Of strawberries, from their sun-steeped bed still warm,
Of ruby-red, sweet-blooded raspberries,
Of satin peaches, golden pineapples.
Bring yellow oranges, great glossy globes,
On silver chargers flashing mirror-like.
Stilled be her hunger ; let her heart embrace
All the new morning's pomp and lavishness.

Let the proud palace-halls enchant her eyes,
While flame-winged butterflies around her flitting
Are mirrored in the floor's green malachite.
On outspread satin let her glide along
Through hyacinths and tulips—at her side
Let branching palm-trees wave their broad green fans,
Reflected in the sheen of crystal walls.
O'er fields of scarlet poppies let her gaze,
Where heaven's children play with golden balls
In the first radiance of the new-born light,
While round her heart sweet harmonies entwine.

THE ANGELS *sing in chorus.*

Bear we her tenderly, lapped in our love,
Eia popeia, to heaven above,
Eia popeia, to heaven above.

[*During the ANGELS' song the scene grows dark. Out of the darkness the song can be heard, fainter and fainter, more and more distant. Presently it becomes light again, and the room in the Pauper Refuge is once more seen, everything being as it was before the appearance of the first vision. HANNELE is again lying in bed, a poor ragged child. DR. WACHLER is bending over her with the stethoscope; the SISTER OF MERCY, holding*

a candle for him, looks anxiously at his face. Not until now does the singing die away. DR. WACHLER, standing erect, says : " You are right." THE SISTER asks : " Dead ? " The DOCTOR nods mournfully : " Dead."

THE END

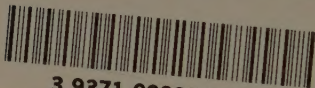
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